

**October 23, 2013**

**Wait time between visa applications**

**Question:** *"I recently applied for my visiting visa and was not approved. How long must I wait before I reapply?"*

There is no mandatory time that you must wait between visa applications. Any applicant is free to make a new application at any time. Officers' decisions are not based on chance, however, so there are certain factors you should consider before deciding to submit a new application.

Under U.S. immigration law, the burden is on the applicant to convince the consular officer that he or she will use the visa appropriately and depart the U.S. at the end of his or her intended stay. Officers consider a wide variety of factors in assessing the probability that an applicant will use his or her visa correctly and return to Jamaica, including present circumstances and past travel.

The Embassy's consular officers are career diplomats who are dedicated professionals. They work hard to apply the same set of standards in adjudicating visa applications, and that they are consistent as a group in their application of the law. Individual officers will almost always reach the same conclusion when presented with the same set of facts. There is no quota system, and every application is reviewed on its own merits. If the applicant can convince the officer of his or her intent and ability to use the visa properly, the case will be approved.

Officers base their decisions on the facts and U.S. Immigration law, which seldom change between visa applications. Before reapplying after a refusal applicants should carefully consider whether the facts of their case have changed in ways likely to change the outcome of an application. If the facts have not changed, the decision is likely to be the same, even though a different officer will review the case.

If an applicant's life circumstances have changed significantly, however, and he or she can present a new, compelling case for qualification for a visa, it is possible that he or she might be successful with a new application. Given that officers consider each case in its individual context, there is no specific milestone or life event that will guarantee that an applicant will be successful upon reapplying. After a significant change in personal circumstances, however, an applicant might consider whether such a change might help make a more compelling case to the officer about the intended use of the visa.

An officer adjudicating the case of an applicant reapplying after a previous refusal will also want to be sure that any recent change in circumstances is likely to be long-term. We therefore recommend that an applicant wait long enough to show that the major life change on which he or she is basing a new application is a lasting one. In some cases, this may mean waiting a year or more before making a new application.